



## Current Topics from Consumer & Environmental Health

Consumer and Environmental Health Services, PO Box 369, Trenton, NJ 08625-0369  
[www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/cehsweb/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/cehsweb/index.html) (609) 588 - 7864

## From the Director's Desk

Welcome to the Consumer & Environmental Health Services "NewsFlash" newsletter. The staff is very proud of their work and accomplishments and will use the newsletter format to keep all of you current on what we are doing. NewsFlash will be published quarterly.

Our goal is for the newsletter to focus on current issues and provide you with appropriate links where you can find more information about the issue.

Your feedback is needed to help us improve our newsletter and give you what you need. You can contact us via our website and/or through the email addresses provided with any comments or suggestions that you would like to share with staff. This issue is meant to familiarize you with

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the Service organization and the programs that we are responsible for implementing statewide.

I sincerely hope that you find NewsFlash a valuable information source for your needs.

*James A. Brownlee*

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## A Guide to Body Art

By Anthony Monaco

Email: [Anthony.monaco@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Anthony.monaco@doh.state.nj.us)

Is body art right for you? More people are considering body art these days than ever before. Tattooing, body piercing, ear piercing and permanent cosmetics are invasive cosmetic procedures which have potential health risks. Based upon the popularity of these procedures and associated risks the Department passed a uniform set of safety standards in February 2002. These standards are enforced by local, regional and/or county health departments. The objective of this article is to provide guidance for those

considering body art in the near future.

The first thing to consider is what you want from body art. The decision should be for personal reasons and not because others are pressuring you. Make a sober decision without the influence of alcohol or drugs. Understand the procedure and be prepared for pain or discomfort associated with the procedure. Consider tattoos and permanent cosmetics as permanent. While laser treatment can remove tattoos, it is expensive, and removal can cause scarring. Piercings are not permanent as all

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# Protect Your Family From Deadly Carbon Monoxide

By Gary Centifonti

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As winter approaches we begin to spend much more time inside our homes. As outside temperatures drop we depend upon our home heaters to provide us warmth and comfort during the winter season. We also may use fireplaces and wood-burning stoves to enhance the appearance and warmth of our homes.

While all these enhance the quality of the time we spend inside during the winter months, it is important to make sure that all of these “heating devices” are cleaned, maintained and are working properly. If not properly maintained any of these heating devices, including portable heating appliances such as space heaters, can produce carbon monoxide. When heating devices are not working properly, heating fuels such as natural gas, kerosene, oil or wood are not burned completely and carbon monoxide gas forms quickly.

Carbon monoxide is a very dangerous gas. It is colorless and odorless but can become deadly if it builds up in our homes. When carbon monoxide is inhaled it is immediately absorbed into the blood stream. Once there, it has the ability to block oxygen from being used by your body. As you continue to inhale carbon monoxide your body becomes more starved of oxygen and eventually serious injury or death can occur. Some common symptoms may occur before dangerous levels are reached. Symptoms may include headache, dizziness, nausea or even cold or flu-like symptoms. Infants, the elderly and people with anemia or heart or respiratory disease are typically more sensitive to carbon monoxide exposures.

Unfortunately, since carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless, it is not possible to know if it is present without a meter or detector. Having a detector in your home is one of the most important ways to prevent accidental injuries or

deaths from carbon monoxide. There are many inexpensive detectors available at retail stores. New Jersey regulations require all detectors to meet Underwriters Laboratory Standard UL 2034. All detectors are required to sound an alarm before potentially life-threatening carbon monoxide levels are reached. If you have a detector make sure the batteries are checked and routinely replaced to make sure the detector works properly.

To protect yourself and your family from carbon monoxide poisoning during the winter months, follow these simple steps:

- Purchase a carbon monoxide detector(s) which meets Underwriters Laboratory Standard, UL 2034, and install them at the proper location(s) within your home.
- Have chimneys and exhaust flues professionally inspected and serviced.
- Have a qualified contractor service all gas and heat appliances and perform routine maintenance at intervals specified by the manufacturer.
- Never burn charcoal or portable camping equipment indoors.
- Never leave a vehicle running inside an attached or detached garage, regardless if ventilation is provided or if the garage door is open.
- Do not attempt to service your gas and heating appliances without proper knowledge, training and tools.
- Do not use ovens, ranges or other natural gas appliances as a substitute for heating your home.
- Do not use gasoline-powered equipment or emergency generators indoors.

For further information contact the Indoor Environments Program at (609) 631-6749 or visit our website at [www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/tsrp](http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/tsrp).

## Cold Exposure and Health

By Sharon Kubiak

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Cold weather is coming, and with it comes the risk of cold weather-related health conditions.

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services' Consumer and Environmental Health Services has developed "Keep Warm, Be Healthy," a brochure that describes hypothermia, frostbite, trench foot and chilblains. The brochure also gives tips on prevention and first aid treatment. You can download and distribute the brochure from our web site at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/hhazweb/keepwarm.pdf>

Exposure to extreme cold can become a life-threatening emergency. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) note that infants and the elderly are especially susceptible to cold. Infants lose body heat more easily than adults, and don't make enough body heat by shivering. Older adults often produce less body heat because of slower metabolic rates and are, generally, less physically active.

However, there are other risk factors associated with hypothermia for all age groups, and include "drinking alcoholic beverages, using neuroleptic medications, hypothyroidism, mental illness, starvation, dehydration, poverty, any immobilizing illnesses, and sustained contact with material that promotes conductive heat loss (e.g., water, solvents, and metals)." (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report; 44(50); 933-5)

For more information on cold weather health emergencies and preparedness, please visit the CDC Winter Weather Emergency Preparedness and Response website at:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/>

for booklets, FAQs, and other resources for residents and health care providers. Several of the links, including "Extreme Cold: A Prevention Guide to Promote Your Personal Health and Safety," are

available in English at

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/guide.asp>

and in Spanish at

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/es/guide.asp>

Just remember, as you're griping about our cold, New Jersey winters, how fondly you recalled them during the hot and steamy summers.

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## Keep Your Hands Clean with Good Hygiene

By: William Manley

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September was National Food Safety Education Month, and this year's theme was **"Keep Their Hands Clean with Good Hygiene."**

Commissioner Fred M. Jacobs, M.D., J.D., noted that New Jerseyans can reduce their risk of food borne illnesses by half simply by washing their hands properly, and dedicated "*National Clean Hands Week*" from September 18-24, 2005 to deliver that message.

"Serious illnesses such as Hepatitis A and salmonella poisoning can result when unclean hands touch food during preparation, delivery or eating, sometimes resulting in death," said Commissioner Jacobs. "Taking an extra 20 seconds to wash hands with soap and hot water can make a huge difference in keeping families at home and patrons at restaurants healthy and safe."

To celebrate National Food Safety Education Month, the NJDHSS Food and Drug Safety Program worked closely with our Partners in Food Safety in the following activities:

### Partnership with the NJ Restaurant Association

During the month of September the Food and

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Drug Safety Program distributed approximately 500 Hand washing Posters to NJ schools with the cooperation of the NJ Restaurant Association and Ecolabs.

#### **PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS**

On September 27, we distributed approximately 1000 Hand washing Posters to representatives of local health departments at the Annual Conference for State and Local Health Officials at the Doral Forrestal Conference Center in Princeton. The posters were to be distributed by the local health officials to schools in their jurisdictions at the time of scheduled inspections of the cafeterias.

#### **Dissemination of Hand washing Items**

On September 10 and 11, Food and Drug Safety Program staff distributed hand washing educational information, fingernail brushes, portable soap packets, aprons and other assorted items to patrons and food vendors attending the African American Festival and the German American Festival at the PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel, NJ.

#### **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NJ FOOD COUNCIL**

On September 23, we attended the NJ Food Council's Good Government Breakfast at the Woodbridge Hilton in Iselin, NJ, and gave away promotional refrigerator thermometers to the attendees.

Food workers and consumers should:

- Wash hands after using the restroom and both *before* and *after* preparing food, particularly raw meat, poultry, eggs and seafood;
- Wash hands after changing diapers, handling pets or touching surfaces that

could be contaminated;

- Wash for at least 20 seconds with hot, soapy water including scrubbing hands, wrists, fingernails and between fingers;
- Rinse and dry hands with a clean towel, air drying device or durable disposable paper towels.

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## **Food Defense**

By: Cynthia Weaver

Email: [Cynthia.weaver@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Cynthia.weaver@doh.state.nj.us)

Protecting the food supply is one of the top priorities for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS.) The Bioterrorism Act of 2002 includes numerous provisions to help ensure the safety of the U.S. from bioterrorism including four major regulations specific to food safety. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as the food regulatory arm of the Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for developing and implementing these food safety measures.

The FDA has adopted the following four regulations that apply to all food facilities:

- Registration of Food Facilities – Domestic or foreign facilities that manufacture, process, pack, distribute, receive, or hold food for consumption by humans or animals in the U.S. must register with the FDA no later than December 12, 2003.
- Prior notice of Imported Food – Beginning on December 12, 2003, FDA must receive advance notice of each

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shipment of food into the U.S. Notice must include a description of all articles, shipper, originating country, and anticipated port of entry.

- Establishment and Maintenance of Records – As of December 12, 2003 persons that manufacture, process, pack, transport, distribute, receive, hold or import food will be required to create and maintain records to identify the immediate previous sources and the immediate subsequent recipients of food.
- Administrative Detention – Authorizes FDA to administratively detain food if the agency has credible evidence or information that the food presents a threat of serious adverse health consequences or death to humans or animals.

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## Tools For Schools Program

By Christa Fontecchio

Email: [christa.fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:christa.fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us)

### Hey Parents!!!!

**Does your child seem to get sick more frequently during the school year?**

**Are you concerned that your child may be exposed to mold in school, causing him/her to suffer from asthma attacks, allergies, and other respiratory problems?**

### Hey Teachers!!!!

**Have you noticed an increase in the amount of student absences in your class?**

**Have you or the children in your class experienced headaches, dizziness, fatigue, or respiratory problems (i.e. asthma, allergies, shortness of breath) while in school?**

If the answer to these questions is “YES”, then the school may have an indoor air quality (IAQ) problem. Good IAQ is an important part of a healthy indoor environment, and can help schools reach their primary goal of educating students.

### What is the Tools for Schools Program?

- Developed by the USEPA to encourage schools to improve indoor air quality (IAQ)
- Implemented by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Indoor Environments Program through an EPA Grant
- Involves all members of the School Staff including:
 

Teachers	School Nurses
Administrators	Custodians
School Boards	Parents
Facility Operators	Students
- Voluntary (non-regulatory)
- No special training required

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### **Why Use the Tools for Schools Program?**

- Improves the working and learning environment for staff and students
- Reduces the number of student and staff absences due to illness
- Is adaptable to individual school needs
- Most NJ schools have IAQ problems that can be solved by school staff
- Involves low or no cost common sense solutions to IAQ problems that may create larger, more costly problems in the future if they are not addressed

Simple solutions include keeping classrooms clean, dry and free from clutter, and inspecting ventilation systems to make sure they are working properly. Using less toxic cleaners and pesticides will also improve IAQ.

### **What Does the Tools for Schools Kit Include?**

- IAQ Tools for Schools Background and School Walkthrough Videos
- Tools For Schools Road Map
- IAQ Coordinator's Guide
- IAQ Checklists for School Staff
- IAQ "Backgrounder" (goes with checklists)
- IAQ Asthma Management Guide
- Problem-Solving Wheel

### **How Do Schools Get Started Using**



### **the Tools for Schools Program?**

- Obtain a Free Tools for Schools Kit
- Select an IAQ Coordinator and review the IAQ Coordinator's Guide
- Identify other key team members
- Watch the IAQ Tools for Schools Background Video
- Distribute IAQ checklists to school staff to ID their own IAQ problems
- Develop an IAQ management plan based on checklist findings
- Watch the Tools for Schools Walkthrough Video
- Conduct a school walkthrough
- Make repairs identified during the walkthrough
- Communicate findings with staff, students and parents

### **What is NJDHSS/Indoor Environments Program's role in implementing the Tools for Schools Program?**

- Conduct school walk-throughs to help ID sources of IAQ problems
- Give presentations and attend meetings
- Answer questions and act as an IAQ consultant
- Provide any other form of assistance as needed by the school

### **How Can Schools Get A Tools For Schools Kit?**

Tools For Schools Kits can be ordered **FREE OF CHARGE** by contacting Christa Fontecchio of the Indoor Environments Program at:

(609) 631-6749

or email at

[christa.fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:christa.fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us)



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piercing can be removed and the holes left behind will shrink until they are barely visible. Depending on the site, keloid formation may result.

The next important decision you will make is choosing an artist. State standards require basic training; however you must find an artist that fulfills your needs from an artistic sense as well as professionalism, price and personality. Ask for references and to see the artist portfolio. Discuss the size, color, placement and design of the tattoo you want with the artist. For piercing procedures discuss placement, type of jewelry, after care and healing times. Color, placement, design and touch ups should be clearly identified for all permanent cosmetic procedures.

Youngsters under the age of 18 must have the presence and written consent of a parent or legal guardian. Since the reproductive organs are still maturing genital piercings are prohibited for minors under 18 regardless of parental consent.

You can ask the artist to see the license or permit issued by the local health department. Also, you may request to see a copy of the last inspection report.

You will be asked to fill out an application which will include a medical health history. It is important to include any medical conditions or medications you are taking. For example, accutane is used in the treatment of deep acne. This drug will present skin that is very tough, making tattoo and permanent cosmetic application difficult and interferes with the healing process. The artist may suggest the client wait until they are off the drug, explaining that they will have much better result later.

The artist should explain all the possible negative and positive results of the procedure so that you can make an informed decision about the procedure.

Once the decision is made all sterile supplies should be opened immediately prior to your

procedure. Be certain that the artist washes his or her hands before the procedure and wears disposable gloves. Listen to the after care instructions and request them in writing before leaving. The healing time will vary depending on the area of the body the procedure was done. It goes without saying that a certain amount of dedication and self discipline is required to keep the site clean and healthy.

Any signs of swelling or infection should be discussed with the artist. But if you have any of the following signs see your health care provider:

- thick yellow or green discharge from the body art, including pus
- continuous oozing or bleeding
- heat or red streaks originating from and moving away from the art
- pain doesn't go away or increases
- unusual pain or swelling.

If an infection is identified by your family physician, report it to the artist and the local health department. Performed correctly and following the after care plan, body art procedures pose little or no risk.

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## Burning Candles in the Home

By: Christa Fontecchio

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With the holiday season upon us, people may use candles to fill their homes with scents of the season while entertaining family and friends. While many people enjoy burning candles in their homes, some may not be aware of some of the dangers involved. In addition to the obvious fire hazard, improperly burning candles can create a permanent black "soot" on walls, floors, drapes, and furniture in the home.

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### Smoking or Sooting Candles

A well-made candle should not produce soot or smoke when burning properly. However, noticeable smoking will occur whenever a candle's flame is disturbed, which allows unburned carbon particles (soot) to escape. In fact, any candle can be made to smoke by causing the flame to flicker. To minimize candle flickering, trim the wick to 1/4 inch before lighting, and place burning candles away from vents, drafts and other strong air currents.

Many popular scented candles are made by mixing oils into the candle wax. The more oil in a candle, the stronger the scent. More oil also means a higher potential for soot, which can eventually coat carpets, drapes, and furniture.

After the soot settles, cleaning it off walls, carpet, couch, and appliances can become impossible. The electrically charged bond is too strong for household cleaners to break. You have little choice but to replace the soiled surfaces or buy new items.

Consumers should know that the minuscule amount of soot produced by all candles is similar to that given off by toasters and cooking oils in the kitchen, and does not present a health concern.

**Source: National Candle Association**

### Candle Safety Tips

Candles are safe products, but may become hazardous when used improperly or in an unsafe manner. National fire safety agencies report that the bulk of candle fire incidents in the United States are due to consumer inattention to basic fire safety or to the misuse of candles.

The National Candle Association recommends the following safety tips when burning candles:

**Always keep a burning candle within sight.** Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or before going to sleep.

**Never burn a candle on or near anything that can catch fire.** Keep burning candles away from furniture, drapes, bedding, carpets, books, paper, flammable decorations, etc.

**Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets.** Do not place lighted candles where they can be knocked over by children, pets or anyone else.

**Read and carefully follow all manufacturer instructions.** Do not burn a candle for longer than the manufacturer recommends.

**Trim candle wicks to 1/4 inch each time before burning.** Long or crooked wicks cause uneven burning and dripping.

**Always use a candleholder specifically designed for candle use.** The holder should be heat resistant, sturdy and large enough to contain any drips or melted wax. Be sure the candleholder is placed on a stable, heat-resistant surface.

**Keep burning candles away from drafts, vents and air currents.** This will help prevent rapid, uneven burning, smoking and excessive dripping. Drafts can also blow lightweight curtains or papers into the flame where they could catch fire. Ceiling fans can cause drafts.

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**Keep the wax pool free of wick trimmings, matches and debris at all times.**

**Always burn candles in a well-ventilated room.**

**Extinguish the flame if it comes too close to the holder or container.** For a margin of safety, discontinue burning a candle when 2 inches of wax remains (1/2 inch if in a container). This will also help prevent possible heat damage to the counter/surface and prevent glass containers from cracking or breaking.

**Never touch or move a votive or container candle when the wax is liquid.**

**Extinguish pillar candles if the wax pool approaches the outer edge.**

**Candles should be placed at least three inches apart from one another.** This is to be sure they don't melt one another, or create their own drafts that will cause the candles to burn improperly.

**One of the safest ways to extinguish a candle is to use a candle snuffer, which helps prevent hot wax from spattering.** Do not extinguish candles with water. The water can cause the hot wax to spatter and can cause glass containers to break.

**Flashlights and other battery-powered lights are much safer light sources than candles during a power failure.** Never use a candle as light when you go into a closet to look for things or when fueling equipment such as a lantern or kerosene heater.

## Who We Are and What We Do

### Office Of The Director

Director: James A. Brownlee

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### NIDHSS Indoor Environments Program

Program Manager: Joe Eldridge

Contact Information: (609) 631-6749

Email: [joe.eldridge@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:joe.eldridge@doh.state.nj.us)

The Indoor Environments Program protects the health of the public by reducing exposures to indoor environmental pollutants and contaminants, asbestos containing materials, and lead-based paint hazards. The Program also handles issues related to school construction, Brownfields redevelopment and related activities. The program accomplishes this mission by:

- Providing education and outreach materials
- Providing consultation and technical assistance
- Conducting field investigations on lead, asbestos abatement projects and indoor environmental health issues
- Assessing exposure and hazard control technologies associated with environmental contaminants

The Indoor Environments Program is also working on a Senior Environmental Health Initiative to provide educational information for older people and their caregivers regarding the importance of good indoor air quality.

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**Lead & Asbestos Training & Certification Project:**

Contact: Cynthia Mitchell

[Cynthia.Mitchell@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Cynthia.Mitchell@doh.state.nj.us)

The purpose of the Lead and Asbestos Training and Certification Project is to protect public health by reducing exposures to lead and asbestos hazards by:

- Administering a Statewide lead and asbestos training program to ensure a trained and competent workforce
- Providing outreach and technical assistance
- Overseeing field investigations on lead abatement projects
- Reviewing lead permit applications and issuing permits to qualified individuals to perform lead abatement and evaluation activities in NJ
- Providing oversight on the State asbestos and lead examinations administered by private contractors

**Technical Assistance Project:**

Contact: Gary Centifonti

[Gary.Centifonti@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Gary.Centifonti@doh.state.nj.us)

This Project provides technical assistance, literature and performs field studies, which evaluate the potential risk of environmental exposures and abatement work practices and technologies. The Project provides a list of qualified Indoor Environmental Quality Consultants, Mold Remediation Firms, Laboratories, and Trade Groups to assist the public in evaluating indoor air quality in their own homes.

**Tools for Schools Project:**

Contact: Christa Fontecchio

[Christa.Fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Christa.Fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us)

Through a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), The Tools for Schools Project provides consultation services and outreach to public and private schools throughout the State in order to help all New Jersey schools improve indoor air quality. Tools for Schools kits can be ordered at no cost by contacting Christa Fontecchio at the main program phone number.

**General Indoor Environment Issues:**

Contact: Christa Fontecchio

[Christa.Fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Christa.Fontecchio@doh.state.nj.us)

This project provides general educational literature and information to the public regarding mold, chemical exposures in the home, carbon monoxide, and other indoor air contaminants.

**The Public Health, Sanitation and Safety Program**

Program Manager: William Hinshillwood

Contact information: (609) 588-3124

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The Public Health, Sanitation and Safety Program of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services provides numerous services and technical advice to the public, regulated community, and local/county health departments. The program is divided up into three major projects.

***Regulated Medical Waste***

Contact Person: Michael Tidswell

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The Regulated Medical Waste project is

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responsible for assessing and reducing human exposures to medical waste that is generated, stored, transported, collected, transferred, treated, destroyed, disposed of, or otherwise managed in New Jersey.

#### *General Sanitation*

Contact person: Anthony Monaco, ES1

E-mail: [anthony.monaco@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:anthony.monaco@doh.state.nj.us)

The General Sanitation project is responsible for the regulation of public campgrounds, tattooing, body piercing and permanent cosmetic procedures, institutional sanitation and infection control, and sanitary conditions impacting the quality of life in New Jersey.

#### *Environmental Health Hazards*

Contact person: Loel Muetter, ES1

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The Environmental Health Hazards project is responsible for the certification of youth camps, regulation of public recreational bathing facilities, maintenance of ocean water quality, evaluation of state correctional institutions, monitoring *Pfiesteria* occurrences, and providing oversight on the mattress statute.

#### **Hazardous Site Health Evaluation Program**

Program Manager:

Jerald Fagliano, M.P.H., Ph.D.

Contact information: (609) 584-5367

[Jerald.Fagliano@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Jerald.Fagliano@doh.state.nj.us)

The Hazardous Site Health Evaluation Program is committed to understanding the public health impacts of human exposure to hazardous substances in the environment, providing

information to the public and preventing disease by the reduction or elimination of exposures. The Program performs these activities through the cooperative work of interdisciplinary project teams, in the following organizational units:

#### *Health Studies:*

Contact: Michael Berry, M.P.H.

(609) 584-5367

[Michael.Berry@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Michael.Berry@doh.state.nj.us)

The Health Studies unit develops and conducts epidemiological studies focusing on both regional and site-specific environmental health problems, including projects examining health outcome endpoints, evaluating biological indicators of exposure, and conducting surveillance. Studies have examined a variety of health outcomes (e.g., cancers, birth outcomes, and asthma), exposure sources (e.g., hazardous sites, drinking water, and air pollution) and chemicals (e.g., asbestos, lead, mercury, chromium, volatile organic chemicals). The unit also includes the federally funded **Hazardous Substance Emergency Events Surveillance** system which collects information on the release of hazardous chemicals into the environment.

#### *Health Assessment and Consultation:*

Contact: Julie R. Petix, M.P.H., C.P.M., H.O.

(609) 584-5367

[Julie.Petix@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Julie.Petix@doh.state.nj.us)

The Health Assessment and Consultation unit, as part of a cooperative agreement with the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, conducts public health assessments of hazardous waste sites, including those listed or proposed to the National Priorities List. The public health assessment process identifies human exposures to contamination at hazardous waste sites, evaluates the public health

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significance of exposure, and makes recommendations to eliminate or decrease exposures, as well as to conduct follow-up activities. To date, over 200 sites in New Jersey have been or are being evaluated. The unit responds to requests for assistance from State and federal environmental agencies, local health departments, and concerned citizens on health-related environmental exposure issues.

*Environmental Public Health Tracking:*

Contact: Barbara Goun, M.P.H., Ph.D.  
(609) 584-5367

[Barbara.Goun@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Barbara.Goun@doh.state.nj.us)

Environmental Public Health Tracking is a project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to demonstrate and evaluate methods for linking existing New Jersey health surveillance databases with existing environmental hazard databases. The demonstration projects will link the following datasets: selected cancer incidence with environmental estimates of benzene, vinyl chloride, and drinking water contaminants; childhood blood lead measurements with environmental lead datasets; and selected birth defects and selected environmental hazards. These projects bring together the expertise of scientists and researchers from multiple parts of the NJDHSS and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).

*Drinking Water:*

Contact: Perry Cohn, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
(609) 584-5367

[Perry.Cohn@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Perry.Cohn@doh.state.nj.us)

The Drinking Water project, in cooperation with the NJDEP, works on activities including epidemiological investigations, regulatory risk assessment, public health education, and

emergency preparedness related to drinking water supplies. Epidemiologic studies have examined relationships between cancer incidence and exposure to chlorinated solvents, disinfection byproducts and radium. Staff represent the Department of Health and Senior Services on the Drinking Water Quality Institute, which makes recommendations to the NJDEP on the development of safe drinking water standards.

*Outreach and Education:*

Contact: Sharon Kubiak  
(609) 584-5367

[Sharon.Kubiak@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Sharon.Kubiak@doh.state.nj.us)

The Outreach and Education unit provides support to the other units of the Hazardous Site Health Evaluation Program by developing fact sheets, educational projects and programs, and conducting outreach to communities and individuals impacted by environmental contaminants. The unit also develops and provides educational materials and seminars for health care providers that may treat patients exposed to chemical and radiological contamination.

**Food and Drug Safety Program**

Program Manager: Richard M. Ritota  
Contact information: (609) 588-3123  
E-mail: [Richard.Ritota@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Richard.Ritota@doh.state.nj.us)

The Food and Drug Safety Program regulates the manufacturers and distributors of foods, drugs and cosmetics. The program provides information to consumers and the regulated industry through the following projects:

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*Wholesale, FDA, Food Project*

Stephen Messineo

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The Wholesale Food and Cosmetic Project is responsible for the licensing and oversees the inspection of firms that produce, prepare, manufacture, store, transport and handle foods and cosmetics intended for wholesale distribution. This project also conducts about 400 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (U.S.F.D.A) inspections of food establishments for compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices. This project can authorize the embargo of and/or witness the voluntary destruction of adulterated products in order to protect the public's health. This project also provides guidance and assistance to local health departments, consumers and industry representatives in interpreting the rules governing these establishments.

*Certificates of Free Sale Unit*

*Labeling, Nutritional Supplements,*

*Cosmetics*

Maria Carin

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As part of the Wholesale Food and Cosmetic Project, this unit processes Certificates of Free Sale to establishments that are licensed and inspected by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. This certificate is used by foreign countries to attest that the product to be exported is equivalent to what is marketed here in United States. The unit reviews labels for compliance with the State and federal requirements, as well as assists local health departments and industry representatives with technical questions related to food labeling.

*Food Security Bioterrorism Project*

Peter DeTroia

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The Food Defense Project coordinates the protection of New Jersey's food supply from intentional adulteration based on Presidential Homeland Security Directives and the Bioterrorism Act of 2002. This project is responsible for defining the Critical Infrastructure within the food sector, disseminating and monitoring the implementation of the Food Sector Best Practices and providing training programs for industry and public health officials. This project also assists industry in conducting site-specific vulnerability assessments and development of emergency response plans.

*Retail Food Project*

William Manley

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The Retail Food Project serves as a technical resource to local health departments and the food service and retail food industries regarding the uniform interpretation and enforcement of New Jersey's retail food rules (NJAC 8:24-1 Chapter XII of the State Sanitary Code) for approximately 55,000 retail food establishments. The project also oversees the direct inspection and regulation of retail foodservice facilities operating on State properties such as the NJ Turnpike, NJ Transit Corp Rail Stations, NJ Sports & Exposition Authority, Juvenile Justice Commission and the NJ Department of Corrections as well as regulating the State's meals for the elderly program funded by the Department's Division on Aging & Community Services. The project oversees New Jersey's Food Manager's Sanitation Certification program to train Foodservice Managers. This project also works closely with the Department's Communicable Disease Service and local health departments in the coordination and investigation of food related outbreaks that occur in retail food establishments.

## Free ServSafe Food Safety Training

### *Dairy, Juice and Bottled Water, Juice Project*

Alan Talarsky

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This project regulates wholesale establishments which produce or process fluid milk products, cheese, frozen desserts, bottled or bulk water, and vegetable and fruit juices. This project serves as the Regulatory Agency for ratings and enforcement of the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) in determining good manufacturing practices. Field staff inspects New Jersey's milk plants quarterly and samples their products monthly. In-state, as well as out-of-state, bottled/bulk water processors and frozen dessert processors are required to be licensed. New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services licenses juice processors as non-alcoholic beverage establishments and are required to have a validated Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan for pathogen reduction.

### *Shellfish & Seafood Project*

Cali Alexander

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This project administers a certification program which requires all wholesale shellfish dealers to handle, process, and ship shellfish under the sanitary conditions and maintain records verifying that the shellfish were obtained from approved areas. By law, each bushel of shellfish must have a tag indicating that it was harvested from approved waters and harvested by State licensed dealers. Shellfish samples are regularly collected from harvest areas, certified shellfish dealers and retailers for bacteriological examination. Also, inspectors routinely check the shipping containers of shellfish to be sure that wholesalers are providing proper identification tags which show the source of the shellfish. The goal of these shellfish safety programs is to help assure the consumer that the clams, oysters and mussels are harvested from areas of the state that are safe.

By William Manley

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The DHSS would like to make you aware of the following training opportunities for both retail food operators and Registered Environmental Health Specialists.

The NJ Restaurant Association (NJRA) has recently been awarded a customized training grant by the NJ Department of Labor to provide the ServSafe Food Safety Training Course to food workers in NJRA Member establishments at no charge.

The ServSafe Training program is a nationally recognized food safety certification program that has been developed by the National Restaurant Association. The course consists of eight hours of instruction from approved trainers using the "ServSafe Essentials" course book and the "Food Safety Employee Guide". Participants must also successfully complete the ServSafe food protection exam prior to being certified. Classes are offered in both English and Spanish.

The NJRA is currently offering training courses at various locations throughout the state. The courses are typically held on Mondays and Tuesdays. The free training is available to current and new NJRA Members and local health department representatives. Representatives of local health departments involved in the inspection of retail food establishments are requested to inform retail food operators in their jurisdictions of the availability of these courses and are also invited to participate in the certification classes.

Visit [www.njra.org](http://www.njra.org) & "Click Calendar" or call Alicia Papp at 800.848.6368 to find out the updated dates and locations.



## Mark Down the Date!

NJEHA ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

March 5, 6 and 7

Tropicana Hotel and Casino

To register: [www.njeha.org](http://www.njeha.org)

## Coming in Our Next Issue:

- Flooding: guidance on cleaning a flooded house and disinfecting a potentially contaminated well
- Mold and other indoor air issues
- Household cleaning product safety (and what common products in addition to ammonia should never be mixed with bleach when cleaning up after flooding or mold problems)

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